

HOW MUCH DO
YOU PAY?
Introducing our
annual staff compensation survey.
page 38

Rolling out the red carpet
for your clients

Answers to your
tax questions

veterinary economics

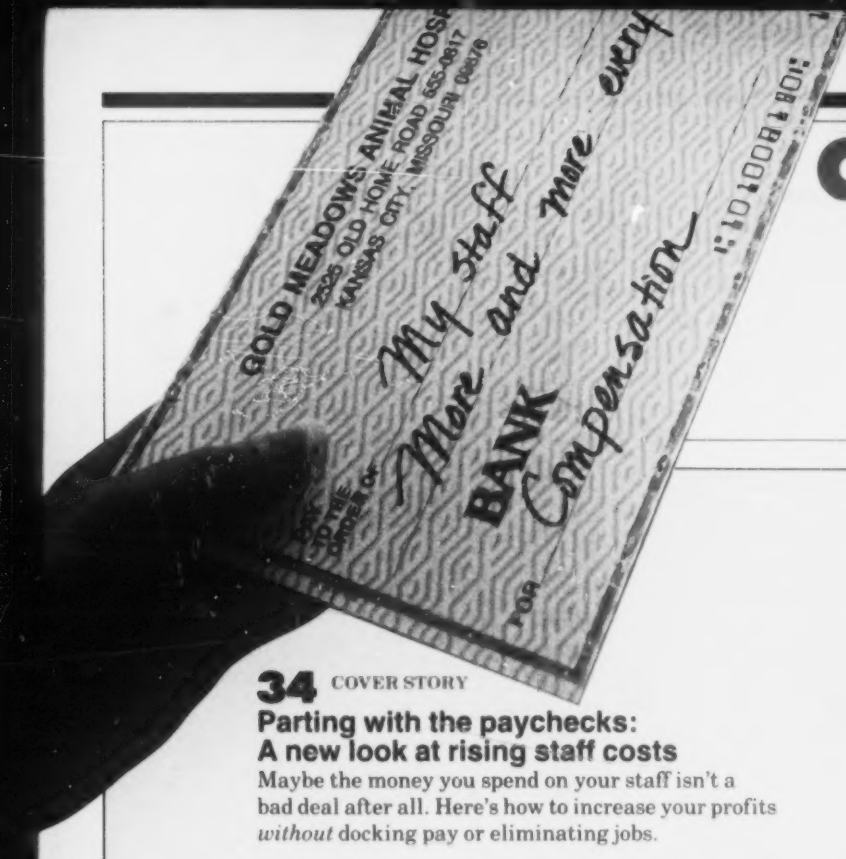
THE MAGAZINE OF PRACTICE MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE

PARTING WITH THE PAYCHECKS

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A NEW LOOK
AT RISING
STAFF COSTS



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FEBRUARY 1990

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Maybe the money you spend on your staff isn't a bad deal after all. Here's how to increase your profits *without* docking pay or eliminating jobs.

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How much do you pay? Introducing our staff compensation survey

With the information we gather from you, we will build an ongoing data base for your comparison, reference, and reassurance.

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Dr. Andrew P. Johnson, a 1989-90 AABP award winner, says that his goal is to guard each herd's health and to fatten his clients' wallets.

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An inadequate telephone system can jeopardize the way you run your business. Here's how to strengthen the nerve center of your practice.

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NOTEWORTHY

RECEPTIONIST TRAINING: HOW DO YOU RATE?

According to one practitioner who responded to a recent VETERINARY ECONOMICS survey, "receptionists are a vital part of your practice. They can make an average veterinarian look good or make an excellent veterinarian appear in a bad light."

So how much time do you and your colleagues spend training these key players? Some 47 percent spend five or fewer days; 31 percent spend up to 10 days. The other 22 percent provided a variety of re-

sponses, ranging from "no time at all," to "three to six months." One respondent spends "several weeks with constant updating and mistake tracking."

According to the survey, 32 percent provide

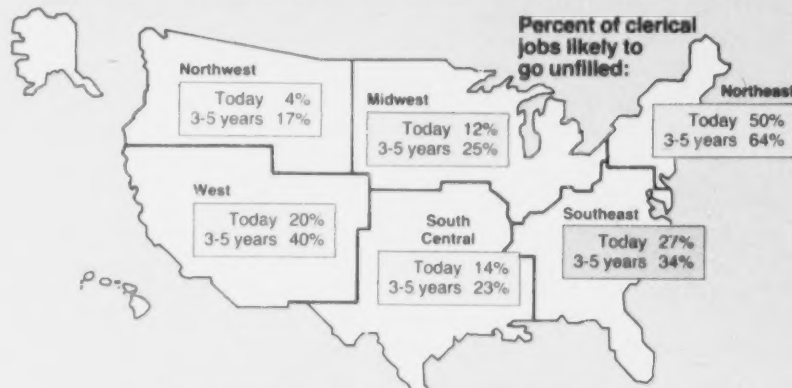
their receptionists with a training manual. The majority of the respondents have employed three or fewer receptionists in the last two years, although one DVM said he's hired—and presumably lost—

10 since 1987.

What role does money play in attracting and keeping good staff members? To help us answer that question, see page 38.

WARNING: STAFF SHORTAGE AHEAD

Finding a new receptionist won't get any easier in the next few years. A recent survey shows that half of the employers polled have trouble finding qualified office workers.



Source: American Society for Personnel Administration

THE SUCCESS FILE

Management ideas that can make a difference

By Bob Levoy

Do Your Clients Appreciate Your Investment?

Are your clients aware of the tremendous investment you've made in your practice facility—the equipment, the building, the land? Our research indicates that most clients give the matter little thought, yet they are surprised and impressed when made aware of your investment. How can you open their eyes?

- Offer new clients a brief tour of your facility.
- Place in your reception area framed photographs—or a photo album—showing such work areas as the operating room, intensive care, and laboratory.
- Include such photographs in a practice brochure.
- Include in your brochure or on a bulletin board a notice to this effect: "Unlike the human hospital, these facilities are due entirely to private enterprise. Private funds are responsible for the construction and operation of this hospital. These funds represent a substantial investment in the community and in the protection of the community's public health and welfare."

Clients who know of the investment required to own and operate your facility will appreciate your service and commitment—and better understand your fees.

Bob Levoy is a management consultant, author, and popular speaker to the veterinary profession.

1990 MARKS NEW CHANGES IN SOCIAL SECURITY

Tax expert Julian Block notes that whether you are mapping out a 1990 budget for your family or for your practice, you'll have to reckon with yet another increase in Social Security taxes.

For 1990, the Social Security tax rate rises to 7.65 percent for both employers and employees, up from 7.51 percent for 1989. The maximum-wage base increases from \$48,000 to \$51,300. If your earnings during 1990 exceed